

# Glass and Mirrors Manual



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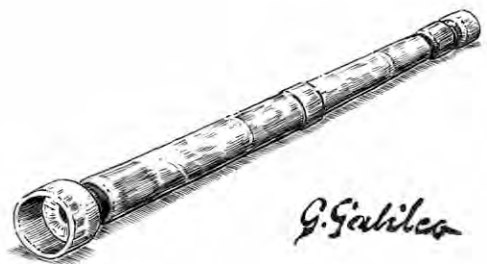
INTERSTELLAR  
STUDIOS



400 YEARS  
of the TELESCOPE  
A JOURNEY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THOUGHT

## ***Introduction: Glass & Mirrors***

Four hundred years ago, Galileo first turned a telescope to the heavens and recorded what he saw. Thus began a revolution in our understanding of the universe.



Telescopes are one of the most important instruments used to reveal the secrets of the universe. From the first reports by Galileo of the phases of Venus through the discovery of the distances to other galaxies to the evidence for planets orbiting other stars, our view of the universe and our place in it has been continually altered in our quest for understanding the phenomena observed in the night sky through our telescopes.

But how do these amazing instruments actually work? They may seem complicated and difficult to understand at first.

In reality, almost all optical telescopes are built on a very simple design – a design that was developed 400 years ago. There have been variations on the basic design, but the idea of using glass or mirrors to collect and focus light has remained the same for the last four centuries.

There are two basic types of telescopes: those that use lenses to collect light (refractors) and those that use curved mirrors to collect light (reflectors).

This demonstration allows you to create a “cutaway” telescope to clearly show how both types of telescopes work.

Have fun giving your visitors an inside look at telescopes!



# Glass & Mirrors

## *An Inside Look at Telescopes*

### ***What's this activity about?***

#### **Big Questions:**

- How do telescopes actually work?
- Why are bigger telescopes better?
- What's the difference between telescopes made with lenses (refractors) and telescopes made with a mirror (reflectors)?
- How are the telescopes of Galileo and Newton similar to telescope designs today?

#### **Big Activity:**

Using a simple setup with lenses and mirrors, demonstrate how a telescope collects light, focuses it, and then magnifies the image.

#### **Participants:**

**Presenters:** A minimum of one person.

**Visitors:** Up to 10 people at a time is appropriate.

#### **Duration:**

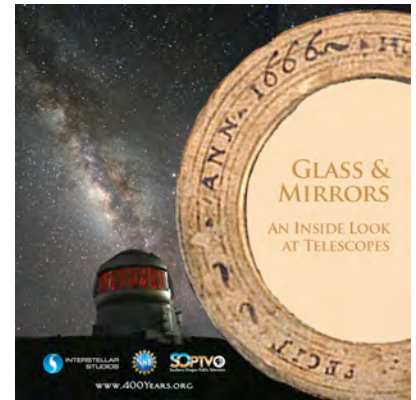
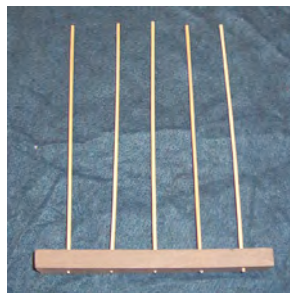
About 15 minutes.

#### **Location:**

The activity is best done at twilight, at night, or in a slightly darkened room. This cannot be done in full sunlight. If in a heavily shaded location, you might be able to do this outside during the day.

#### **Materials:**

- An optical bench or similar set up is required for this demonstration (right).
- See the Materials and Set Up section for a way to construct your own optical bench.
- You will also want to make the Foam and Sticks model (below) and explained in the Materials and Set up sections.



## Table of Contents

### Contents and Topics Covered:

What's this activity about?.....	3
Table of Contents .....	4
Helpful Hints .....	4
Background Information.....	5
SETUP .....	6
Detailed Activity Descriptions .....	8
Glass & Mirrors: Introduction.....	8
Glass & Mirrors: Light Gathering Power .....	9
Glass & Mirrors: Magnifying the Image .....	12
Glass & Mirrors: Mirrors for Gathering Light.....	14
Glass & Mirrors: Handout "400 Years of the Telescope" .....	18
Troubleshooting.....	19
Presentation Summary List.....	20
Further Exploration .....	21
Glass & Mirrors: Why is the image upside down?.....	21
Glass & Mirrors: Light Spreads out with Distance .....	24
Materials .....	26
Suggestions from the Glass and Mirrors Testers .....	31
Template for Foam and sticks .....	32
Visitor Handout "400 Years of the Telescope".....	33

## Helpful Hints

**This activity is best done at twilight, at night, or in a slightly darkened room. It cannot be done in full sunlight. If in a heavily shaded location, you might be able to do this outside during the day. Bright lights will wash out images on the screen.**

Think of this demonstration as a cutaway telescope: a telescope your visitors can see and explore. The optics in real telescopes should not be touched to avoid ruining or smudging the elements. So, for this demonstration, encourage your visitors to hold and touch the lenses and mirror. It will help them better see, feel, and understand that they are curved. Use lens paper as needed to clean them.

You may notice multiple images in the small secondary mirror – tell your visitors to direct their attention to the brightest image. There can be internal reflections in the small mirror since it is just a regular mirror and not front-silvered.

For additional help, see "Troubleshooting" on page 19.

## ***Background Information***

There are many misunderstandings about telescopes. A few are listed here.

### **Common Misunderstandings addressed by this activity:**

- Magnification is the most important feature of a telescope.
- Telescopes are complicated and difficult to use.
- Telescopes can see through clouds.
- Telescopes are “magic” in that most people have no idea how they work.



## **Additional Background Information**

### **Why are mirrors used instead of lenses in many telescopes?**

Get background information from NASA's Telescopes from the Ground Up website:

<http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/resources/explorations/groundup/>

Choose the section “Era of Early Refractors.”

We want our telescopes to collect as much light as possible. This is done by increasing the diameter of the collecting area (also called the aperture). If the telescope uses a lens to collect light, the larger the aperture, the larger the lens must be. The rim of a lens is much thinner than the center. Lenses can only be supported around the rim since light must go through them. As the lens becomes larger, it becomes heavier and more difficult to mount. A very large lens will also begin to sag under its own weight, distorting the image.

A telescope that uses a mirror to collect light can be designed so the mirror is fully supported across its entire expanse. This allows mirrors to be much larger than lenses, thereby allowing reflecting telescopes to collect much more light to detect the dimmer objects in the universe.

Here is more information on this topic and includes a discussion of chromatic aberration in lenses: <http://astro.uchicago.edu/vtour/whyrefl.html>

### **Why do we need different types of telescopes to look at outer space?**

[http://science.nasa.gov/newhome/headlines/features/ast20apr99\\_1.htm](http://science.nasa.gov/newhome/headlines/features/ast20apr99_1.htm)

**Guide for buying a telescope**, including the advantages and disadvantages of each type:

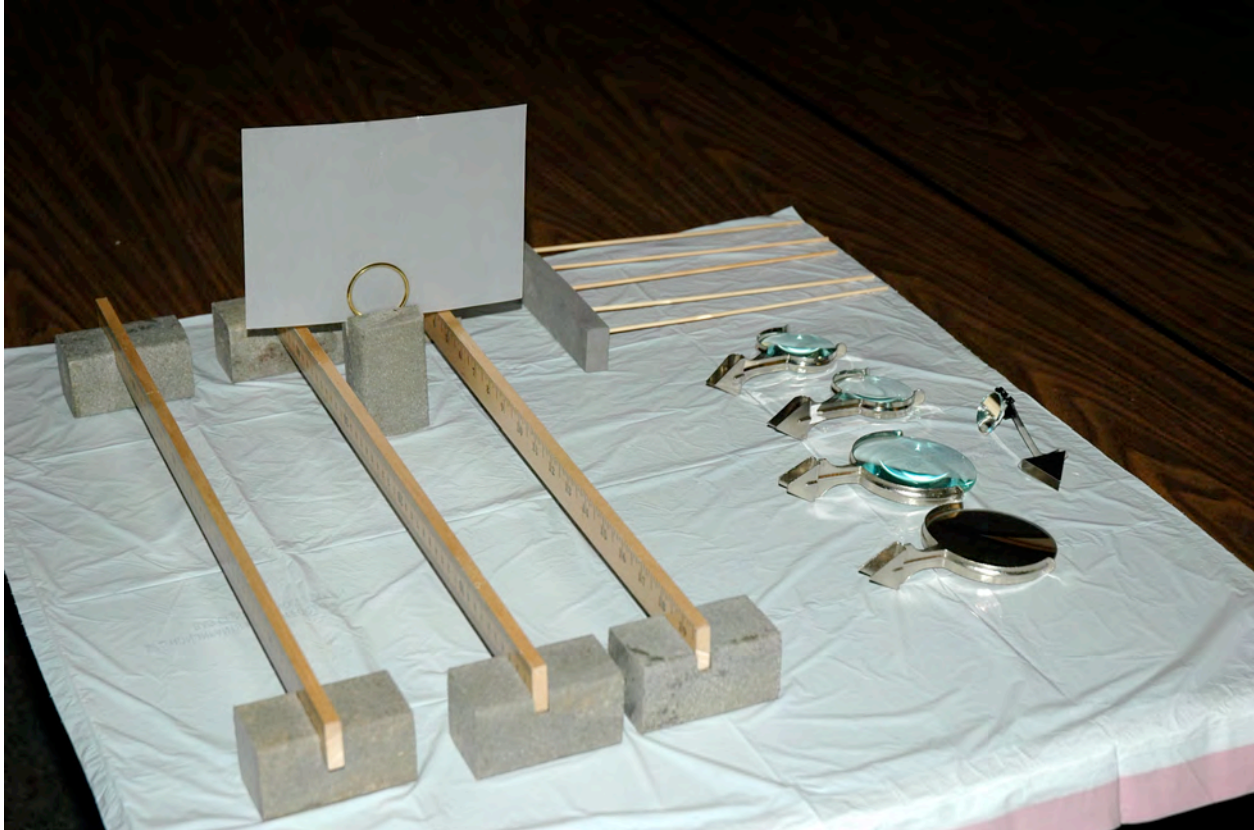
<http://www.astronomy.com/asy/default.aspx?c=a&id=2281>



## SETUP

For first time set up, see “What do I need to prepare?” on page 27.

The activity is best done at twilight, at night, or in a slightly darkened room. This cannot be done in full sunlight. If in a heavily shaded location, you might be able to do this outside during the day.



Place the 3 lenses and 1 mirror in their respective holders lying on the table:

- 2 – 50mm diameter lenses (one has focal length (FL) of 75mm, the other 200mm FL). These are referred to as the “small thick” and “small thin” lenses. The “small thick” lens is the “magnifier” in this demonstration.
- 1 – 75mm diameter lens with 200mm FL. This is referred to as the “large lens”
- 1 – 75mm mirror with 150mm FL. This is referred to as the “large mirror”

Assemble the 3 meter-stick sections with stands side by side as shown above.

Place the screen on its stand between two of the meter-sticks, with about 4 inches (8 cm) from the end opposite the flashlight.

Set up your table so that your visitors will have easy access to the materials.

It is advisable to test your setup before you start your demonstrations – especially the height and orientation of the “secondary” mirror – the little one-inch round mirror on the flat metal holder. Make sure it is at the right height to reflect the focused image from the large mirror. See “Troubleshooting” on page 19.

Have at the ready:

- The “secondary” mirror: the small mirror attached at a 45-degree angle (approx) to the clip on the flat metal holder
- 1 business card or other paper with small type on it
- 1 set of Foam and sticks
- 1 Flashlight with the cutout image of crescent moon 5 to 8 feet (1.5 to 2.5 meters) away (If telescopes are set up near you, be sure you are set up to point the light AWAY from the telescope area). The flashlight bulb should be 5” to 8” (13 to 20 cm) above the level of the table where you have the demonstration set up (see photo at left). In other words, the center of the flashlight should be slightly above the center of the large mirror when the mirror is on the meter-stick section.
- (Optional) Extra batteries for the flashlight or an additional flashlight.



Start with the flashlight turned OFF.

There should be no lights in the area behind the flashlight – those will also be focused on the screen and cause confusion about which image to focus on.

There should be no lights shining directly on the screen. They can wash out the image projected through the lenses onto the screen.

It is advisable to setup over grass, dirt, carpet, or other soft surface. It is possible that visitors (or you!) might drop the lenses, causing them to chip or break.

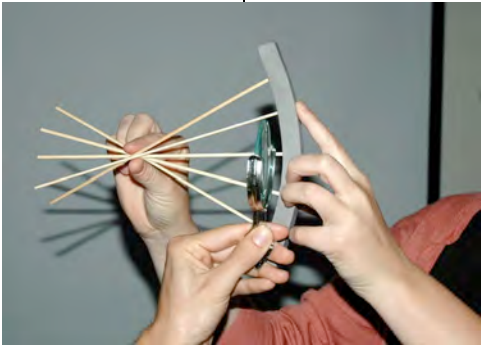

## Detailed Activity Descriptions

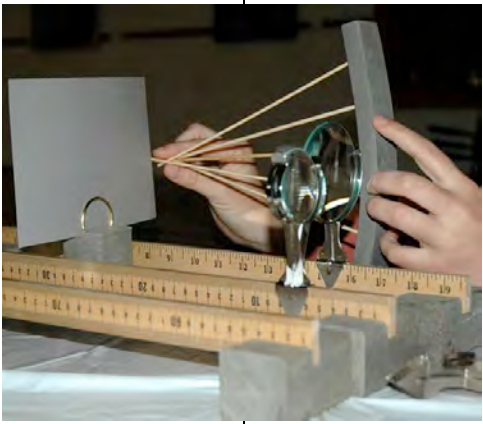
### Glass & Mirrors: Introduction

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Do:</u> If you have the opportunity, have your visitors look at a number of telescopes before the demonstration.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> What can you tell me about telescopes? What did you notice about how telescopes are constructed? What parts do they have?</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Point to the lenses and mirrors on the table.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Well, to get down to basics, telescopes are made with mirrors and lenses.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> If you have a telescope or two handy, have visitors look to see where the mirror and/or lenses are.</p> <p>Hold the two smaller diameter lenses (50mm) over the paper with small type.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Let's take a look at these 2 lenses.</p> <p>Do these both magnify the same?</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Ask a few other visitors to take a look as well.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> OK – let's use that lens as our magnifier. (Set aside the small thick lens that magnifies more) Let's look at these other two lenses.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Pick up the small, thinner lens and the large lens (50mm diameter 200mm FL lens and the 75mm diameter lens) and hold them over the paper.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> As you can see, one lens is larger than the other. But do these magnify about the same amount?</p>	<p>Various comments.</p> <p>No – this one magnifies more. (indicating the thicker of the two lenses – the one with the 50mm FL)</p> <p>Yes, about the same</p>




## Glass & Mirrors: Light Gathering Power

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Say:</u> All right, let's use those two lenses as our light gatherers. But what do we mean by light gatherers? Do you notice that the lenses are curved?</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Pick up foam and sticks.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Imagine we have a clear flat piece of glass, like a window, between you and me, can you see me clearly? The light reflecting off my face goes straight through the glass with little or no change in direction. But these pieces of glass are curved, so they change the direction of the light coming through them.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Allow the visitors to notice that the lens is curved glass. Hold the glass near each person's face.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Can you see me clearly through this lens? Lenses gather and concentrate light into a small area by changing the direction of the light.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Use foam and sticks to illustrate the focal point. (See Further Explorations for more information)</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Let's see what that means.</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>No!</p> 
<p><u>To Do:</u> Place the two "light-gathering" lenses on two adjacent meter-stick sections.</p> <p>Turn on the light with the moon image.</p> 	

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Say:</u> Can you see that there are a couple of fuzzy patches on the screen? Try to get those into focus by moving the lenses closer or farther away, like this.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Demonstrate how to move the lens.</p> <p>Then pick up foam and sticks.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> So the light is coming through each lens and is being bent and concentrated into this small area here.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Bend foam and sticks to a point with the focal length the same as the focal length of the lens.</p>	<p>Visitor moves lenses so images are focused on screen.</p> 
<p><b><u>Going further (OPTIONAL):</u></b> Some may not understand why the image goes in and out of focus.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Notice that if the image is projected here, in front of the focal point, the light is spread out and you get an unfocused spot. If we move the screen here, in back of the focal point, what's happening to the light here?</p> <p>So there is only one point where the image is in focus. At the focal point where all the light rays come together.</p>	<p>It's spread out again.</p>
<p><u>To Say:</u> Can you see a difference in the brightness of the two images?</p> <p>The light coming from the moon over there is spread out all over this area.</p>	<p>Yes, this one is brighter (indicating the larger lens's image).</p>
<p><u>To Do:</u> Next to the larger lens, bend the foam and sticks to a point with the focal length the same as the focal length of the lens.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> The lens is taking all the light hitting it and curving it, concentrating it like this.</p>	

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Do:</u> Next to the smaller lens, take the 3 inner sticks and hold them together at the focal point.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Whereas this smaller lens is only collecting this much light and concentrating it, so it's dimmer – not as much light is being gathered.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> How much light does your eye gather – how big is your pupil?</p>	<div data-bbox="938 216 1396 625" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1149 636 1442 741">Lots smaller. So my eye collects even less light.</p>
<p><u><b>Going further (OPTIONAL):</b></u> Show that having a larger lens is like having a larger opening for your eye.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Right! What happens to the pupil of your eye when you go into a dark room after being outside in the sunlight? Does that help you see better in the dark room? Sure – your eye is collecting more of what little light there is in the room. Using this lens (indicating the smaller “light-gathering lens”) is like making your eye this big! And using THIS lens (indicating the larger “light-gathering lens”) is like making your eye THIS big! Could you see a lot more in the dark room or at night with eyes this big? So telescopes gather light similar to the way your eyes gather light – as the opening gets larger, you can see dimmer things more easily.</p>	<p data-bbox="1149 972 1344 1035">It gets bigger! Yes.</p> <p data-bbox="1149 1297 1230 1329">Yeah!</p>
<p><u><b>Presentation Tip:</b></u> See the “Further Exploration” Section starting on page 21. This discusses two points in more details:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some people will notice that the moon image is upside down and reversed. Use the activity “<b>Why is the image upside down?</b>” to explain what’s happening.</li> <li>2. Some people will want a better explanation about how light spreads out as it leaves its source. (“The light coming from the moon over there is spread out all over this area.”) Use the activity “<b>Light Spreads out with Distance</b>” to explain what’s happening.</li> </ol>	

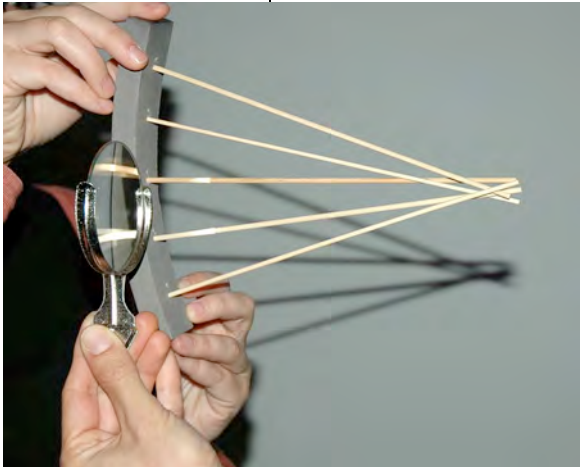
## Glass & Mirrors: Magnifying the Image

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Do:</u> Adjust the angle of the meter-stick section so that the image on the screen is over the meter-stick. This aligns the lens to point directly toward the moon image.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Now, we've got a small image here on the screen, so let's take our magnifier (small thick lens) and see if we can make the image larger so we can see it more easily.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Place the magnifier on the meter-stick on the opposite side of the screen of the larger lens. Lean down to look through the lens at the image on the screen.</p>  <p><u>To Say:</u> Does it make the image look bigger? Come take a look.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Remove the screen.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Now, telescopes don't have screens in them, so let's take the screen away and now look through the magnifier, called the eyepiece, because it's what we look through with our eye. What do you see?</p> <p>Now imagine placing a tube around this and what do you have?</p> <p>And that is basically how the telescope that Galileo used worked: Using a lens to gather, then concentrate the light into an image in this little area, then using a magnifier to make the image bigger so we can see more detail.</p> <p>400-year-old technology – still in use today!</p>	<p>Visitors look at image through lens.</p> <p>Wow! Yes, I see the image bigger and really bright. (Might also make comments on other details they see)</p> <p>A telescope!</p> <p>Hey – I could make that!</p>

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><b><u>Going further (OPTIONAL):</u></b>  Show that the concentrated image is still there in the space between the lenses, even though we can't see it unless we look through the eyepiece (or magnifier).</p> <p><b><u>To Say:</u></b>  Now, is that little image still hovering here in space (pointing to the general vicinity of the concentrated image)?</p> <p>Put your finger in there – can you see the focused image on your finger?  So the image the magnifier is magnifying is this little image right here.</p> <p>This might be clearer using the mirror as our light-gatherer.</p>	<p>Various answers.</p> <p>Wow – yes!</p>





## Glass & Mirrors: Mirrors for Gathering Light

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Do:</u> Pick up the mirror in its holder.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> But most astronomers use mirrors in their telescopes as light gatherers instead of lenses. (See "Background Information" on page 4 for further explanation.) Here's a mirror – notice that it is curved?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p><u>To Do:</u> Use foam &amp; sticks to illustrate the following.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> If we have a flat mirror, the light hits the mirror and reflects straight back out, but with a curved mirror, the light hitting the mirror is bent and concentrated again. Like this.</p>	
<p><u>To Do:</u> Bend foam. Place mirror on third meter-stick section at the end farthest from the flashlight and facing the flashlight.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Let's put the mirror here. Now remember that the light is coming in on this side and reflecting back out, so where will we look for the concentrated image? In front of the mirror or in back of it?</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Place screen in front of mirror, completely blocking the light from the flashlight.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Right! Let's see if we can find it. Here's the screen. If we place it here, what have we done – can any of the light from the moon hit the mirror?</p>	<p>Out here, in front of the mirror.</p> <p>No, you've blocked all the light.</p>

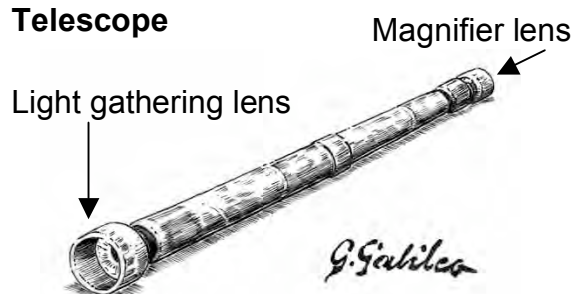
Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Say:</u> OK, so let's move it off to the side so that at least some of the light is hitting the mirror (moving the screen to the side). See – there's the light on the edge of the screen.</p> <p>Go ahead and bring that image to a focus.</p>	<p>Visitor moves screen so image is focused.</p>
<p><u>To Do:</u> Adjust the angle of the meter-stick section so that the image on the screen is over the meter-stick. This aligns the mirror to point directly toward the moon image. This way the image is more likely to appear in the little mirror you will be using next.</p>	
<p><u>To Say:</u> OK. Now let's take the lens again and try to magnify the image.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Place the lens in front of the screen. Bend down and look through the lens. (Image disappears – your head is in the way!)</p>	
<p><u>To Say:</u> But if I put my head here, what have I done?</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Stand up and place the lens on the table.</p>	<p>Blocked the light again!</p>
<p><u>To Say:</u> So we have to move the little image to one side or the other so we can see the image. (Pick up the small mirror – see photo at the left)</p> <p>Do you think if we use this, we might be able to reflect the image off to the side?</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Place the small mirror on the meter-stick and slide it into the place where the screen image was, making sure the height of the mirror matches the height of the image on the screen. Tilt the large mirror's holder forward or backward as needed to adjust the height of the image.</p>	<p>Yes – it's a small mirror.</p>



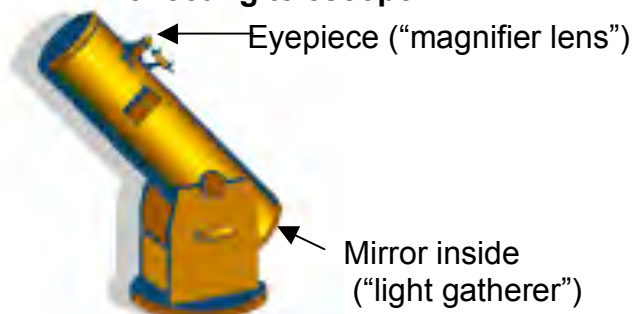
Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Say:</u> If we take this little mirror and place it right where that image is, we can reflect that image off to the side, like this.</p> <p>Now the image is being reflected off over here. Remember that when light comes into a mirror at an angle, it's going to reflect back out at the same angle (point to the path the light is taking). So we need to look out here for the image. Move over here and look into the mirror from this side, can you see the moon image now?</p> 	<p>Visitor looks for the image in the small mirror.</p> <p>There it is!</p>
<p><b><u>Presentation Tip:</u></b> You may notice multiple images in the small secondary mirror – tell your visitors to direct their attention to the brightest of the images. There can be internal reflections in the small mirror since it is just a regular mirror and not front-silvered.</p>	
<p><u>To Do:</u> Hand the lens you are using as a magnifier to the visitor. (Some people, especially children, find it easier to use the small thinner lens as your “magnifier”, but you may use the thicker lens. Use the one that’s easier for your visitors.)</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Right – now look at the image again, then hold the magnifier between your eye and the moon image. See if you can get everything lined up so you can see the moon through the magnifier, which we call the eyepiece. Remember to hold the eyepiece so the image is focused.</p> 	<p>Visitor takes lens and views the image in the little mirror.</p> <p>I see it!</p>

Leader's Role	Participants' Role (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Say:</u>  Now, once again, imagine a tube here extending away from the mirror and a short tube sticking out the side with the eyepiece in it. You have a basic reflector telescope – a telescope that reflects the light off a mirror and concentrates it to make a bright image.</p> <p>How long do you think telescopes have been made THIS way – with a large mirror?</p> <p>Isaac Newton designed the basics of this type of telescope over 300 years ago (in 1680's). And the design idea was so elegant and effective that it has not changed very much in all that time. The Hubble Space Telescope uses this basic technology – using a mirror to gather and concentrate light.</p> <p>Have fun tonight looking through instruments made of glass and mirrors whose origins go back 400 years!</p>	<p>The last 50 years?</p> <p>Yeah!</p>

### Galileo's Refractor Telescope



### Reflecting telescope



### Presentation Tip:

Many backyard telescopes are of a Cassegrain design that has a secondary mirror which reflects the light back through a hole in the middle of the primary mirror to reach the eyepiece.

You can just explain to visitors who ask about this different design that the smaller mirror just reflects the light back through a hole in the large mirror. This is instead of reflecting the light off to the side.

The smaller mirror is already blocking some of the light that would reach the center of the large mirror. So having a hole there will not reduce the effectiveness of the telescope. There is still plenty of light reflecting off the rest of the large mirror.

## Glass & Mirrors: Visitor Handout "400 Years of the Telescope"

### Leader's Role

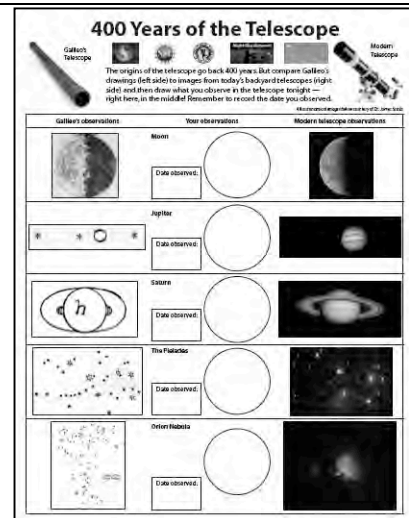
#### To Do:

Pass around the "400 Years of the Telescope" handout to your visitors. This gives them a tool to view and sketch the same objects Galileo observed 400 years ago. As an extension activity for use with telescopes, show how Galileo's drawings compared to what we see through a modern backyard telescope. Then have your visitors draw what they see tonight.

Note that all objects will not be visible at all times. Encourage visitors to come back when you know that Saturn, for example, will be visible. Use this as an opportunity to talk about how planets "wander" across the permanent patterns of background stars. Or about how different stars are visible at different times of year.

Galileo's telescope was not nearly as powerful as telescopes we use today and the glass he used was of very poor quality, but he had the benefits of very dark skies and a good dose of patience to help him.

Find the "400 Years of the Telescope" Visitor Handout on page 33.





## ***Troubleshooting***

### **The images on the screen are too high or too low.**

Check the seating of the lenses or mirror in their holders. Sometimes, during handling or transporting, the lens may have tilted slightly and no longer be vertical in the holder.

### **I can't see any images on the screen.**

Make sure you've aligned the meter-sticks to point at the light.

Check the location of your light-gathering lenses – they need to be between the light and the screen.

Make sure you are using the thinner of the two smaller lenses as one of your light-gathering lenses.

If you are using the large mirror, make sure the screen is between the light and the mirror. Check that the screen is pulled off to the side so the screen is not blocking all the light from hitting the large mirror. (*See Illustration #17 on page 25*)

### **I can't get a clear image in the small round mirror OR I can't see ANY image in the small mirror.**

Be sure the holder of the small mirror is placed on the meter-stick at the focal point of the large mirror – about 6 inches (15 cm) from the large mirror.

Make sure the small mirror is adjusted to the height of the image that you saw on the screen.

Try tilting the holder of the large mirror slightly backward to raise the level of the focused image or slightly forward to lower the focused image.

For additional help, see "Helpful Hints" on page 4.

## ***Presentation Summary List***

This summarizes the steps in the Glass & Mirrors demonstrations. Use this list to prompt your presentation.

### Introduction: Difference between Magnifier and Light-gatherer

1. Test 2 smaller lenses for magnification.
2. Test thinner small lens and large lens for magnification.

### Light Gathering Power

3. (Large lens & small thin lens) Which image is brighter?
4. Use foam & sticks to illustrate why larger lens has brighter image.

### Magnifying the Image



5. Place MAGNIFIER lens on meter-stick behind the screen to have visitors view the image.
6. "Now image placing a tube around this and what do you have?"
7. 400-year old technology.

### Mirrors for Gathering Light

8. Flat mirror vs. curved mirror. Use foam & sticks to illustrate light path.
9. Have visitors focus image and line up image on screen over meter-stick.
10. Place small round mirror at location of focused image (at the focal point) to re-direct the image to the side.
11. "Now imagine a tube here extending away from the mirror and a short tube sticking out the side with the eyepiece in it."  
Newton's telescope design.
12. Technology over 300 years old.

## Further Exploration

### Glass & Mirrors: Why is the image upside down?

Leader's Role	Participants' Roles (Anticipated)
<p><b>Key message for your visitors to take home:</b> Many telescopes invert the image. The telescope may also flip the image right for left. These are effects of a curved mirror or lens.</p>	
<p><b>Materials:</b> Spoon, foam with sticks. Use a shiny spoon that reflects your image well. You must be able to see yourself in the bowl of the spoon. Stainless steel usually works well.</p>	
<p><b>Presentation Tip:</b> The only time you probably get this question is when you are looking at the Moon or at a terrestrial object.</p>	
<p><u>Question from visitor:</u> The Moon doesn't look right. It looks upside down.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Hand the visitor the spoon and, if it is too dark to otherwise see their reflection, shine a red light indirectly toward their face.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Hold this spoon a couple feet from your face.</p> 	
<p><u>Alternate way, using telescope:</u> If it is still daylight and you have a reflector telescope, ask them to stand about 5 to 8 feet in front of the telescope and look down the barrel – they may have to look off center.</p>	
<p><u>To Say:</u> How do you look?</p> <p>Why is your image upside-down?</p>	 <p>Upside-down!</p> <p>I don't know.</p>

To Do:

Hold up foam and sticks.

To Say:

This telescope has a curved mirror in it to collect the light. When you look in a flat mirror, the light comes straight back out at you. The top spoke is where your forehead is and the bottom spoke is where your chin is. But a spoon is curved -- so is the telescope mirror.



To do:

Curve the foam strip.





To Say:

NOW where is your forehead and where is your chin?

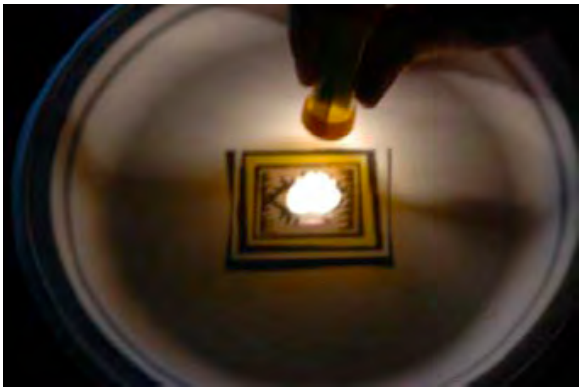
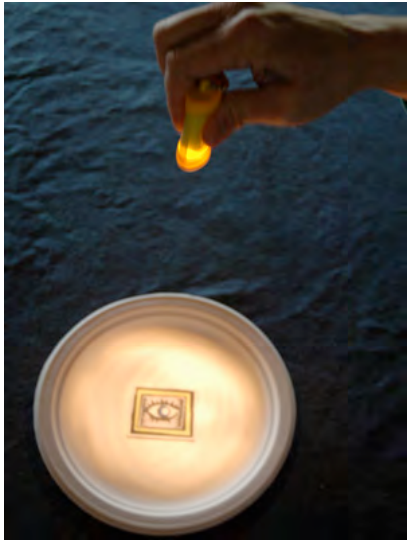
Reversed!

That's the difference between astronomical telescopes and spotting scopes you might use to find birds. You could put one more mirror or lens in the path of the light in the telescope to turn the image right side up again, but with each additional element (lens or mirror), some light is lost. For astronomers it's more important not to lose that dim light than it is to have it the image "right" side up.

Leader's Role	Participants' Roles (Anticipated)
<p><b>Presentation Tip:</b> Many visitors might notice when looking in the spoon that when they raise their right hand, the opposite hand of their upside down reflection is raised.</p> <p><u>Question from visitor:</u> Wait a second – when I raise my hand, the opposite hand is raised in my reflection.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Hold foam and sticks horizontally.</p>  <p>Hand the foam and sticks to the visitor and ask them to figure it out or talk them through it while they bend the foam.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> Once again, when you look in a flat mirror, the light comes straight back out at you. Here's your right hand and here's your left. But a spoon is curved -- so is the telescope mirror.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Curve the foam strip.</p>  <p><u>To Say:</u> NOW where is your right hand?</p>	



## Glass & Mirrors: Light Spreads out with Distance

Leader's Role	Participants' Roles (Anticipated)
<p><b>Key message for your visitors to take home:</b> Although other telescope characteristics, like magnification, are sometimes referred to as the telescope's "power", the most important power of a telescope is its ability to collect a lot of light, determined by the aperture (i.e., the diameter of the telescope's large lens or mirror).</p>	
<p><b>Materials:</b> Drawing of an eye on a paper plate, a small flashlight.</p>	
<p><u>To Say:</u> By the time light from the universe reaches Earth, the light is very dim. The farther the light-emitting object is away from us, the dimmer its light appears to us here on Earth. Why? Light radiates. It spreads out as it leaves its source. Let's see what that means.</p> <p><u>To Do:</u> Draw an image of eye onto paper plate. Hold a small flashlight very near the eye.</p>   <p>Start very close to the eye then move the light away and watch how the light spreads out and dims.</p> <p><u>To Say:</u> How much light is coming in here (indicating the pupil of the eye)?  (Refer to a circular plate representing a telescope mirror). "How much light is this one collecting?"</p>	<p>Answers</p> <p>Just that little amount.</p> <p>A lot more.</p>

Leader's Role	Participants' Roles (Anticipated)
<p><u>To Say:</u></p> <p>If I was to take this light to {that mountain top, over to that city, on top of that building} would you still be able to see it?</p> <p>Right, less of its light is reaching us, because it is spreading out – a bit like water spraying out of your showerhead – the farther from the showerhead, the more the water is spread out.</p> <p>If you place a bottle cap in your tub to collect the water, are you going to collect much?</p> <p>How about if you had a pie pan? Would you collect more water?</p> <p>The bottle cap represents how much light your eye can collect and the pie pan represents how much light a telescope mirror could collect.</p> <p>There is only so much light coming from an object each second. Little packets of light called photons. The farther you are away, the more the photons of light are spread out.</p> <p>A galaxy outside of the Milky Way is tremendously far away and its light is spread out in all directions, all over the universe. So only a little of its light, or photons, hits the surface of the Earth. But the light is spread out all over the side of the Earth facing that galaxy. The more of its photons we can collect, the more likely we are to see it. Telescopes have big mirrors to collect as much light as possible.</p>	<p>Probably not.</p> <p>No. Lots more.</p>

## Materials

### What materials do I need? (You can find where to get these items on page 29)

- Foam strip
- Skewer sticks
- Glue
- Concave mirror - 75 mm diameter x 150mmFL
- Lens: dbl convex 50mm diam x 200mm FL
- Lens: dbl convex 50mm diam x 75mm FL
- Lens: dbl convex 75mm diam x 200mm FL
- Lens paper pack of 50 sheets
- An Optical Bench with lens holders, **or**:
  - 2 - Lens Holder - 75mm lens
  - 2 - Lens Holder - 38mm lens (for 50mm lenses)
  - 3 – Meter-Stick sections
  - Optic Bench Object Marker
  - Screen Support
  - Key ring for screen holder
  - Optical Bench supports
- 1" round glass mirror
- Binder Clip
- 2 - Screens - Laminated Vellum
- 5 Envelopes for storing glass and mirrors
- Black plastic sheeting square
- (Optional) Crescent moon shape
- Wax paper square
- Flashlight & batteries
- Rubber band - to attach moon cutout to flashlight
- Scissors
- Tape
- Pencil
- Business card, book, magazine, or other paper with small writing on it.
- Box or books to raise flashlight to appropriate height.
- Table(s)
- (Optional) Backup Batteries for lantern flashlight



For the “Further Exploration” Activities:

- Stainless steel spoon – you must be able to see yourself in the bowl of the spoon.
- 8" paper plate
- Drawing of an eye
- Small flashlight

## What do I need to prepare?

### **Mirrors and Lenses:**

- Insert the three lenses and one mirror into the lens holders that fit them.
- Notice that the lens holders are two different sizes. Use the larger ones for the large lens and the mirror.
- For storage, leave the lenses and mirror in their holders and insert them into the envelopes.

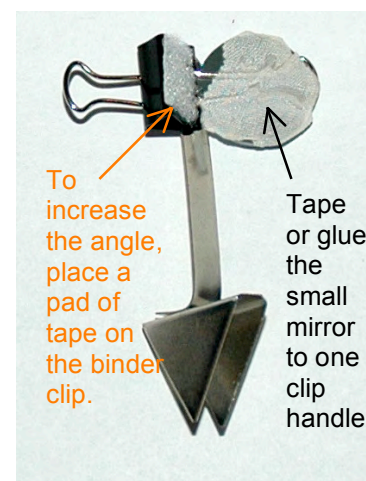
### **“Secondary” mirror assembly:**

1. Tape or glue the flat one-inch round mirror to the binder clip as shown at right.
2. Attach the clip to the metal pointer.



Parts for small mirror assembly

3. The mirror should be roughly at a 45-degree angle to the meter-stick. If the mirror is at too narrow an angle, roll a small piece of tape into a pad and place it on the clip as shown. You may instead cut a small wedge from the holder's blue protective pad and attach that to the clip.
4. Store in an envelope.



Completed screen assembly

### **Screen Assembly:**

- If the key ring has a small metal ring attached it, remove the small ring and dispose of it.
- Press the key ring into the slot on the screen holder.
- Insert the screen into the key ring as shown.



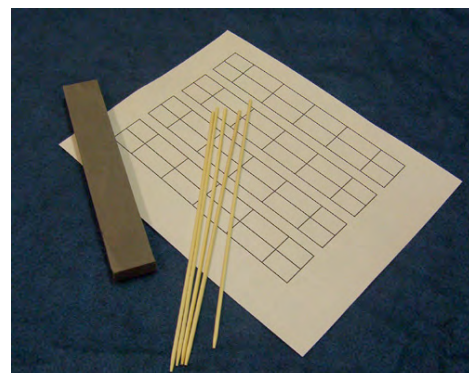
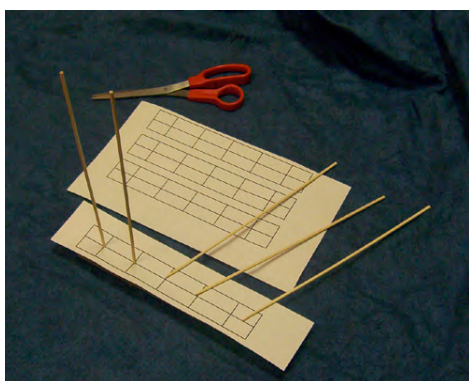
### Moon-on-flashlight assembly:

- Use the square of black plastic sheeting.
- Draw or trace a 2" to 2.5" long crescent shape onto the middle of the plastic square.
- Using scissors (or a matte or X-acto® knife), cut out just the crescent shape: **DO NOT cut from the edge of the plastic.** If using scissors, you can fold the plastic in half, cut out a half-crescent, then unfold it to reveal the whole crescent.
- Spread a thin film of glue around the edge of the crescent opening and press the sheet of wax paper onto it. Allow to dry.
- Wrap the moon assembly over the front of the flashlight, positioning the moon shape so it is near the edge of the light.
- Secure with a rubber band.



### 1. To make the foam and sticks:

- a) You need the Template sheet (included here), five skewer sticks, and a foam strip.
- b) With scissors you supply, trim about 1/4 inch off the sharp end of each skewer stick.



- c) Place one foam strip template on one of the foam strips and insert the skewer sticks into foam strip at the marks – try to make them as vertical and parallel as possible.
- d) Remove the template.

- e) **Loose sticks?** If the sticks in the foam get loose after several uses, you can either:
  - glue them into the holes by using white glue or by wiping the end of each stick over a glue stick

Or move each stick just to the right or left and make a new hole. This option will only work for 3 or 4 relocations of the stick before you'll need a new piece of foam.



## Where do I get materials?

Websites listed here are where the materials in these pictures were obtained. You may of course choose to acquire the materials from other sources.

### Foam & Sticks

1. Skewer sticks: grocery store
2. Foam strip: You can use any fairly dense soft foam (like the material some computers come packed in) or you can order the material we found worked best at: <http://www.oneoceankayaks.com/> - the material is "Minicel Foam". Order the 5/8" thickness. A 20"x24" sheet will make 48 strips that are 1-1/4" x 8". You can use a utility knife to cut the foam.
3. Foam Strip Template: See page 32
4. Glue: Office supply store

### Lenses and Mirrors

5. Concave mirror - 75 mm diameter x 150mmFL [www.schoolmasters.com](http://www.schoolmasters.com)
6. Lens: dbl convex 50mm diam x 200mm FL <http://www.surplussshed.com/>
7. Lens: dbl convex 50mm diam x 75mm FL <http://www.surplussshed.com/>
8. Lens: dbl convex 75mm diam x 200mm FL <http://www.surplussshed.com/>
9. Lens paper : School science materials suppliers
10. Lens Holder - 75mm lens <http://www.scienceartandmore.com/>
11. Lens Holder - 38mm lens (for 50mm lenses) <http://www.scienceartandmore.com/>
12. Envelope: A regular envelope works, or for one that doesn't tear, try Tyvek® 3 1/2 x 6 1/2 Open End Coin Envelope <http://papermartinc.com/>

### Optical Bench

13. Meter Stick - cut in half <http://wardsci.com/>
14. Screen Support: As a substitute, use a paper cup or Styrofoam cup with a slit cut in it. (See photo to the right)
15. Key ring for screen holder: Hardware Store or search for "Optic bench screen holder" (below)



16. Optical Bench supports: These are made from a composite material called Trex®. If you have a wood shop, you can make your own out of wood and use a router or dado blade to make the groove for the meter stick. You can purchase metal supports commercially by searching the Internet for “meter stick optical bench accessories.” (right)



17. You may also want to search the Internet for “meter stick optical bench” or “meter stick optical bench accessories” to get some of the parts you need for the stick, supports for the stick, and some of the lens holders and lenses.
18. Screen - Laminated Vellum. Vellum can be purchased at an office supply store. Printing companies often have laminating services.

#### “Secondary” Mirror

19. 1" round glass mirror (qtys of 144): C.O.D. Wholesale (codwholesale.com) or Party supply store.
20. Binder Clip – small: Office supply store
21. Optical Bench Object Marker (holder for the small mirror)  
<http://www.hometrainingtools.com/>

#### Flashlight Assembly

22. Black plastic sheeting (“visqueen”): 8”x8” (20cm x 20cm). Available at hardware and construction stores. You can also use black construction paper.
23. Crescent moon shape (not available commercially). You can make your own template.
24. Wax paper: Grocery store.
25. Flashlight and batteries: Hardware Store.

#### Visitor Handout: “400 Years of the Telescope”

26. Visitor handouts: find the master included on page 33

## ***Suggestions from the Glass and Mirrors Testers***

**The Astronomical Society of the Pacific wishes to thank the members of the astronomy clubs who reviewed and tested these activities.**

- Cameron Park Rotary Community Observatory
- Eastbay Astronomical Society
- Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society
- San Mateo County Astronomical Society
- San Francisco Astronomical Association
- Sonoma County Astronomical Society

Here are their tips for a successful presentation:

- Spend some time with the set up first, play "what ifs" with placement of the lenses. Explore!
- It's OK to touch the lenses – they're not coated. It really does help your visitor understand their shape if you let them touch.
- Make sure your visitors know it's really hands-on:
  - Put the lenses and mirror in their hands.
  - Then tell them, "That's the last piece of glass you'll touch tonight..."
- Practice!
- The script works well for preparation, but use the Presentation Summary List on page 30 for the presentation itself.
- If you're in a new environment, be sure to try out the lighting and alignments before you start your presentation. You may need to make adjustments.
- If your audience is likely to be mostly adults, you might consider setting up on a taller table or countertop to raise the whole demo up so your visitors don't have to bend over so far to see through the lenses. As an alternative, you might provide a chair for taller people to sit on to get down to the height of the lenses.
- Leave the lenses and mirror in their holders and just store them in their envelopes. It makes setup much faster.
- Try using both the small lenses as eyepieces (or the magnifiers) to demonstrate why we use different eyepieces to magnify the image formed by the objective.





***FOAM STRIP TEMPLATES***

# 400 Years of the Telescope PBS



Galileo's  
Telescope



INTERSTELLAR  
STUDIOS






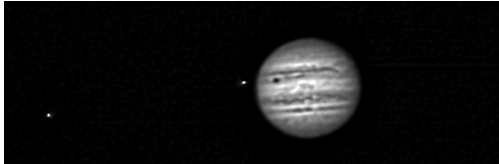
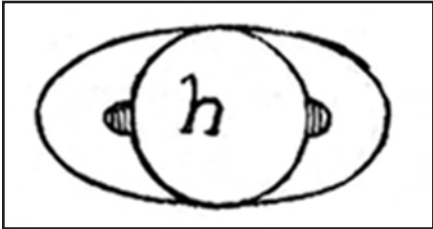



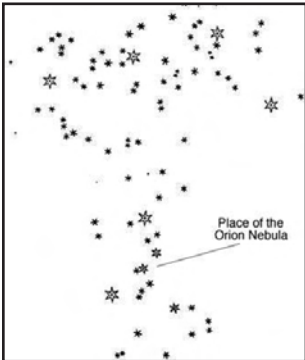

400 YEARS  
of the TELESCOPE  
A JOURNEY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND THOUGHT



Modern  
Telescope

The origins of the telescope go back 400 years. But compare Galileo's drawings (left side) to images from today's backyard telescopes (right side) and then draw what you observe in the telescope tonight — right here, in the middle! Remember to record the date you observed.

*All astronomical images below courtesy of Dr. James Scala.*

Galileo's observations	Your observations	Modern telescope observations
	<p><b>Moon</b></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px;">Date observed:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 150px; margin-left: 10px;"></div> </div>	
	<p><b>Jupiter</b></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px;">Date observed:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 150px; margin-left: 10px;"></div> </div>	
	<p><b>Saturn</b></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px;">Date observed:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 150px; margin-left: 10px;"></div> </div>	
	<p><b>The Pleiades</b></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px;">Date observed:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 150px; margin-left: 10px;"></div> </div>	
	<p><b>Orion Nebula</b></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-right: 10px;">Date observed:</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 150px; margin-left: 10px;"></div> </div>	

**Designed and distributed for members of the  
NASA Night Sky Network and other ASP education networks**

The Night Sky Network is sponsored and supported by:

- **400 Years of the Telescope** <http://www.400years.org/>
- NASA's [Kepler Discovery Mission](#), Grant NAG 2-6066, SETI Institute
- JPL's [PlanetQuest](#) public engagement program,
- NASA's [Origins Forum](#),
- NASA's [Structure and Evolution of the Universe Forum](#)
- NASA's [Solar System Education Forum](#)

The Night Sky Network was founded by:

JPL's Navigator ([PlanetQuest](#)) public engagement program

NASA Night Sky Network: <http://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/>

## **Contacts**

The non-profit Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP), one of the nation's leading organizations devoted to astronomy and space science education, is managing the Night Sky Network in cooperation with NASA and JPL. Learn more about the ASP at <http://www.astrosociety.org>.

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